

## WHICH SHALL IT BE?

BY CLARENCE M'BRIDE.

In the last chapter of the book of Joshua and a part of the 15th verse will be found these words, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

This short sentence, so full of meaning, was uttered by the wise prophet Joshua in the last days of his life, and as yet one who had authority, he called all the captains and officers of Israel together while they were now in the land of the Amorites, and told them that the Lord had said that they were not living in a land won by the sword or the bow neither were they living in cities of their own building, and the fruit of the vineyard and oliveyard which they ate they did not plant, but for all the battles which God had won for them and all the necessities of life which he had provided for them, some were inclined to worship some of the idols in the land of the Amorites and some of them still clung to the Lord as their leader. It was here that the words found in Joshua 24:15, were spoken by this trustworthy prophet. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve, whether it be the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." What was their answer? Ah, they said every one of them "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods." This is an expression that can be told to every worldly man, "choose ye this day whom ye will serve." There is but one God and he has said, "thou shalt have no other gods before me." Now whom will ye serve. You are to decide this question for yourself. Will you serve the Lord with all thine heart and thus receive the crown which he has laid in store for you, and dwell in all the luxuries of a mansion in that celestial city? For Christ has said, "I go to prepare a place for you," and "in my father's house there are many mansions." Or will you serve the devil and be forever lost in a fatal doom which awaits every one that resorts to worldly pleasures and heedeth not the voice of Christ at the door of the heart gently pleading—come home. No, you will give up all hopes of ever being a Christian and will turn your back to Christ. But do you remember how that when the multitude turned their back to Jesus, it was here he showed the earnest love for his people, standing with outstretched arms he said, "how can I give thee up." Oh, what sympathy the Saviour has for us.

This question may be asked of us, how

can we give up Christ? Some of us may say, "yes, I ought to be a Christian but I will wait a little while longer." But alas your fate is forever sealed as Jesus will not always stand at the door and ask you to receive him, as was the fate of Capernaum once a prosperous and holy city which was at one time exalted unto the kingdom but would not submit to the law of Christ until it was too late and Jesus had gone from them and went down to Jerusalem. Then they began to realize the doom that awaited them and they wanted Jesus. But lo, he was gone. Now is the accepted time. Take him while he is near. Jesus stands waiting. Did you ever stop for one moment and think that Christ will never turn you away no matter what your character may be? True, some people may say you are not good enough and will therefore talk about you if you do try to serve your Redeemer, but they only mis-locate the devil. He is working thorough the hearts of those people and is trying to draw them back to him. Even in the beginning of the world did the devil do some of this kind of work. In the garden of Eden the devil first began his work, next at the altar of Cain and so he has continued even unto this day. One of the strongest fortes he has against the Christian nation is the saloon. We first have to get the evil out of the way before we can get Christ.

The devil tells you to turn your back and shut the door of your heart against Christ. Do you choose to serve your worldly possessions such as money, dress, jewelry, etc., and turn your kind and loving Saviour away thus? One reason why we should never reject him is because he will (if we ask him) bear us up, even as an eagle would stretch out her wings and bear up her young. The Lord will never drop us as long as we prove true to him. There is another question even the words spoken by the prophet and messenger of the Lord, unto the children of Israel in the time of their rebellion against the first commandment. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camps and said, "who is on the Lord's side let him come unto me." Oh, "choose ye this day whom ye will serve." You know "the wages of sin is death," as was dealt to every one that worshiped any other than the God which was their only guide. Have you yet chosen whom you will serve? Are you true to your Creator? In times of temptation he will strengthen you that you may be able to meet the strongest evil successfully, being equipped with the armor of righteousness and the sword of the spirit. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve" and do it truthfully.

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## A GOOD MAN GONE.

[Published by request of his brother.]

Brother and sister Joseph Zimmerman of New Virginia, mourn the death of their son John, who was a conductor on the W. and A. railroad in Georgia, and met with a violent death. The following obituary and account of his death was prepared by G. W. Forr, and published in the Marietta Journal:

Mr. John Zimmerman was born in Virginia, February 29, 1846, and died in Marietta, Georgia, February 9, 1895. In his early life, his father removed to Wayne Co., Ohio where John grew up, and where his twin brother Jake, still lives. He was converted and joined the Methodist church in early manhood and being a young man of great promise, he was soon appointed class-leader, which position he filled several years with remarkable ability. He came to Georgia eleven years ago and soon identified himself with the people of God. He was a great Sunday-school worker and loved the church devoutly. In all his relations in life and his dealing with men, he displayed the highest Christian virtues. He was kind and loving like our Lord. This was perhaps the secret of his great popularity. As a friend, he was frank and faithful; as a father, considerate and indulgent; as a husband, loving and tender; as a Christian, zealous and true. In fact all the elements of a noble manhood were prominent in his life. Almost without a moment's warning the end came to this good man. He was doubtless prepared to go, and with feelings of delight he passed over to meet and greet the loved ones on the shining shores. He was struck by a passing engine in Marietta, as he was changing the switch for his own train. He lived several hours after the accident, but was unconscious all the while. All that willing hands and loving hearts could do to relieve him, was done, but in vain. The end was peace. He fell asleep as a little child falls asleep in its mother's arms. Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep; from which none ever wake to weep. Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace. May the widow's friend, and the orphan's God, care for, and comfort the weeping ones.

How beautiful is the divine order in the work of grace! First, life; and then the fruits of life. First, grace in the heart; and then blessings in the life. First, salvation from sin, as the controlling power; and then that salvation proving itself in good to all whom it can reach; first the Spirit owning Christ as Lord, and then the daily conduct proving that Spirit by copying his example.